

THE PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL



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OPINION RESEARCH AID TO PR

By FRED L. PALMER

NONE OF US DARES STAND ALONE

By GENERAL DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

VOLUME 4

NUMBER 11

NOVEMBER

1948

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THE PUBLIC RELATIONS JOURNAL

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS SOCIETY OF AMERICA, Inc.

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Copyright 1948, and published monthly by, the Public Relations Society of America, Inc., at 525 Lexington Avenue, New York 17, N. Y. Of the amount paid as dues by members of the Society, \$5.00 is for a year's subscription for *The Public Relations Journal*. Entered as second-class matter September 27, 1948, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Subscription rates: \$5.00 a year. Single copy 50c.

PR JOURNAL

Volume 4
Number 11

NOVEMBER, 1948

Opinion Research as An Aid to Public Relations Practice

By FRED L. PALMER

Partner, Earl Newsom & Company

IT IS UNUSUAL, I understand, for a representative of the public relations field to take part in your discussions. This seems to me unfortunate if true. It is of the greatest importance to us that public opinion research grow, develop, mature and expand. We should do all we can to help.

Public opinion research and public relations counsel are really two different responses to the same new conditions. Today, as never before in the history of the world, the common man exercises a powerful influence over the management of the world's affairs. Fifty years ago an astute Frenchman named Gustav LeBon remarked that the rivalries of sovereigns were no longer the principal factors shaping events. "The destinies of nations," he said, "are elaborated in the heart of the masses and no longer in the councils of princes . . . The divine right of the masses is about to re-

place the divine right of kings." He called this "The Era of Crowds."

Your function, as I understand it, is to know, measure, analyze and weigh public opinion. Ours is to help people deal constructively with the force of public opinion. I think Gustav LeBon would have accepted the phrase "The Era of Public Opinion" as a good translation of his meaning.

The Art of Leadership

I have been asked: "To what extent is the public relations art, as currently practiced, based on scientific knowledge?" We think that it is to a very great extent an art and not a science. We think it will probably always be to a very great extent an art — part of the art of leadership.

We nevertheless feel very strongly that our future as professional counsellors depends not only on a better understanding of our own techniques of communication, but on the progress you make in being able to interpret public opinions promptly and accurately so that leadership in industry, in politics, in government, or wherever it may be,

Editor's Note: Text of an address at a round table discussion, International Conference on Public Opinion Research, Eagles Mere, Pennsylvania, September 13, 1948.

can measure its problems and determine its progress.

What Is "Public Relations Practice"?

Our topic here this morning is "Opinion Research as an Aid to Public Relations Practice." My first assignment is to describe "public relations practice."

This is a very difficult task. There are great differences among public relations organizations and departments. Some are concerned almost exclusively with getting publicity for a company, a product or an industry. Even organizations or departments of this kind may differ widely. Some are concerned with only a small piece of a business, publicizing the pencils but not the pens — publicizing the soap but not the hair tonics — publicizing the cars but not the trucks.

At the other extreme are organizations which are concerned primarily with helping managements of corporations and other institutions to understand the forces of public opinion working for and against them, and to move in tune with their times. An institution whose basic thinking, reflected in its policies and actions, gets out of step with the American people can have a very bad time of it.

In order to keep our discussion within a manageable range, I would like to assume that we are here concerned primarily with public relations people and organizations of the second type. I think this is the area in which opinion research can be of the greatest aid to public relations practice.

We Must Understand Basic American Attitudes

If we accept that it is a function of a public relations counsellor to help an enterprise to understand and deal with public attitudes which are likely to affect it significantly, it is obvious, I think, that the counsellor must himself be continually aware of public opinions and understand them.

As you know, the American people look with some suspicion on Bigness. The phrase "*Big Business*" is used by those who want to put business at a disadvantage. You hear increasingly today the phrase "*Big Labor*."

It is our own feeling that the American people are not against Bigness but merely wary of it. They are conscious of its strength and want to be quite sure such strength is under *good* management. They recognize the tremendous advantages which come in some fields and under some conditions from big organizations. They are for *good Bigness* and against *bad Bigness*.

If this is a correct reading of the polls, we are in a much better position to advise a big company than if we accepted either the notion that Americans everywhere admire (or should admire) Bigness, or the other notion that they are everywhere opposed to it (or should be opposed to it).

Under such circumstances the problem of a big enterprise is not to try to look and act as if it were, in fact, a little business (like the prowler in the hen coop saying: "There ain't nobody here but us chickens"), but to be especially conscious that the policies of the company must, in fact, be good and in the public interest — and, what is equally important, must be so recognized.

Some Public Relations Uses of Opinion Research

We as a firm and as individuals have had considerable experience with public opinion research. We have worked very closely with Elmo Roper and his organization for a good many years.

We have used opinion research to probe many different areas. Some years ago, at our recommendations, the American Locomotive Company made a very careful study of *shareholder* opinions which proved to be extremely valuable

in developing company policies with respect to that important public. The Standard Oil Company (New Jersey) made a notable study of *employee* attitudes at Baton Rouge which was one of the most valuable investigations of this kind we have ever seen. Mr. Roper, who did that research, does continuing studies of public attitudes for "Jersey" which we refer to constantly in making recommendations regarding company policies on matters affecting public opinion.

Detailed studies of employee opinions have also been made at the Ford Motor Company under the urging of Henry Ford II, who places a very high value on employee opinions.

We have also used public opinion research to analyze *plant town* and *regional* attitudes, and we have used it to study *consumer* attitudes toward two basic commodities — tea and wool.

We have used Elliott-Haynes in Canada for various problems having to do with *Canadian* attitudes.

We see the "Index for Industry" surveys made by Opinion Research Corporation. We watch the Psychological Corporation's Link Audit very carefully, and have, ourselves, charted its semi-annual results for easy and frequent reference. We follow the published polls closely, including notably Gallup and Fortune. We have found the National Opinion Research Center work very valuable and interesting. We try to keep in touch with new developments in your field. We read The Public Opinion Quarterly and other publications.

As we considered how we, as a firm, might make some practical contribution to those of you here, it seemed to us that we might be most useful if we made some specific suggestions. I offer these:

1. We Need More Studies of Opinion in Motion

More than anything else, I think, we

would like to see more continuing series so we can study public opinions in motion. A question is asked once by a polling organization and either never repeated or never repeated in the same form or to the same or equivalent audience. The Link Audit is one of the very few series with any substantial history so far as I know. We recently examined polls available to us — including published polls — and discovered only 132 questions that had been asked more than once in the past ten years. About half had been asked twice and some two-thirds had been asked three times or less.

Hadley Cantril has an extremely interesting article on "Opinion Trends in World War II" in the spring 1948 issue of The Public Opinion Quarterly. Both his charts and his observations confirm the importance of studying public opinion *in motion* — and that means continuing series.

The existence of a continuing series in the form of the Link Audit — which, as you know, semiannually tests public opinion to find out whether people are favorable or unfavorable toward eight major American corporations — made it possible for us to notice recently what appears to be a strong seasonal trend in attitudes toward business as represented by these leading and well-known corporations. Consistently, people like them less in May than they did in November, and they will almost certainly like them better next November than they did last May. This saw-tooth trend was interrupted only once or twice during a ten-year period, when strong emotional forces were affecting public opinion in the war years.

If there is a seasonal trend in public attitudes on a question of this kind, it is very important to us to be aware of it. It raises major questions of behavior. A specific corporation, for example, may be well advised to take constructive actions that are newsworthy in the au-

tumn when the trend of public opinion is already moving in a favorable direction, and do what it can to stay out of the news during periods when public opinion is likely to have a jaundiced eye.

I should add that the saw-tooth behavior of our Link chart very closely parallels the saw-tooth pattern of employment, which is seasonal. Employment may respond to seasonal forces, but public opinion may be responding to employment factors and not to the seasonal forces. If we had many more continuing series, we could compare opinion data with economic data more often in a search for root causes.

Closely related to the need for more and more continuing series is the need for greater frequency. The Link Audit, for example, would be more valuable, in our opinion, if it were taken quarterly instead of semiannually. And we wish the "Little Link Audit" of smaller companies had a long history so we could compare reactions to large and small companies.

2. We Need More Studies of the Public Temper

My second suggestion concerns a very interesting question which has often come up for discussion in our organization — what we call the "climate of public opinion."

It is possible at any time to obtain a small group of key economic facts and reach a conclusion regarding current economic conditions. The National Industrial Conference Board is an invaluable help to all of us in this field. We can obtain information regarding gross national product, national income, inventories, employment, retail sales, installment buying, etc., and make an estimate of the economic conditions or "climate" through which we are passing. But experience has not yet worked out any indices in the field of public opinion to indicate the public temper

or state of mind at any particular moment. We have no comparable data in the opinion field to indicate "the climate of public opinion" at a given moment. It is an area which we think merits a good deal of exploration.

The Fortune "Consumer Outlook" is a move in this direction. It seeks to measure the state of mind of people today with respect to selected economic problems. This is all to the good. But it is nevertheless true that man does not live by bread alone. We are going through a world revolution in the field of ideas, it seems to me, but we have no instruments set up to record the changes that are taking place. The "Collectivist Ideology in America" study by Opinion Research Corporation, which sought to establish how far left or how far right various elements in our population might be, was a very interesting move in the direction of measuring the temper of our people in the field of political ideas.

Some members of our organization suggest that the keystone fact which we should establish at any particular moment may be how people feel regarding the basic question of Security as compared with the idea of Self-Reliance, Risk, Enterprise, Freedom, Independence. I think that is a very astute suggestion.

There is, in addition, the whole broad field of religion and the area of spiritual values. If it were possible to measure the "religiousness" of people at any particular moment, we would have a significant factor to consider in any attempt to estimate the temper of the American people and of public opinion.

We realize that this is a large question. We are aware that economic statistics have developed over a considerable period, and many indices came only after a substantial amount of undigested statistics had been accumulated so that they could be studied. Our thought here is merely to suggest that

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there is a need — perhaps a parallel need — for the development of indices which will permit those who must deal actively with public opinion and who act in a climate of public opinion to make a reasonable estimate regarding the temper of public opinion.

3. We Need More "Pure Research"

There is substantial need for what we may call "pure research" — done for the purpose of establishing general principles rather than to meet a specific and pressing problem. Much of the day-by-day work of public opinion research organizations is done "on order" to help a particular client get the answers to a particular and usually an immediate problem. The client does not want to support pure public opinion research alone and unaided. A corporation which is tremendously interested in public opinion in the labor field at one time, for example, may legitimately lose all interest in this particular question the next year — and yet the research begun during the period when it was interested in labor attitudes would be of great value if continued.

Perhaps this points to the need for a central agency to accumulate, centralize and compare a considerable amount of public opinion data. Fortunately my task here is not to suggest how this can be done, but merely to suggest that it would be tremendously helpful if it could be done. We are again reminded that organizations like the National Industrial Conference Board arrive at indices by a process of studying, comparing and coordinating a vast amount of statistical data.

A great amount of public opinion information already exists in the public domain. A great deal of data collected for private enterprises probably would be gladly contributed by many of them to a common research pool (perhaps after a decent competitive interval) if

a central agency or research pool existed. I think a good many individuals and enterprises which have an interest in this whole subject could be induced to support a central organization — similar in character, perhaps, to the National Industrial Conference Board — if the desirability of a central agency were presented to them.

Such a central agency could have the support of the leading public opinion research organizations; the leading public relations organizations; and various corporations, industries and institutions which are conscious of the importance to them of public opinion.

4. New Techniques Are of Great Interest

We are always delighted to see opinion research experimenting with new techniques. We are very much interested in the work being done to record radio listening electronically and otherwise. We are very much interested in the work which is being done in the field of word associations, and have had some experiments conducted ourselves in this area. We are very much attracted by the possibilities which exist for imaginative correlating of economic developments with opinion developments, and for correlating public opinion with news developments.

We would like to see more research conducted which would indicate what causes opinions. George Gallup's work in the field of the "Quintamensional Plan of Question Design" is most interesting — and so are reports like that of Herbert H. Hyman and Paul B. Sheatsley of the National Opinion Research Center on "Some Reasons Why Information Campaigns Fail." There is, we think, a faulty assumption that if people are only exposed to what the "exposer" considers "correct" information, everything will turn out all right. It isn't nearly so simple as that. We were

particularly interested in the word association research reported by James M. Vicary, and in his analysis of reactions to the word "advertising." To us, advertising space is an important public relations instrument for communication but it needs study and development. We are conscious that using this particular instrument may sometimes be inadvisable, and may even defeat the whole purpose of the message. This can be true in cases where labor and management are fighting for public confidence and advertising merely serves to suggest that management is well heeled.

We read all of Richardson Wood's reports on the work he is doing with communities.

We would like to see public opinion research range over a wide imaginative area.

5. The Need for Quick, Inexpensive Techniques

We need more quick, simple and inexpensive methods of measuring public opinions and reactions so that we will more frequently test public opinions before and after actions on the part of our clients. We do not do as much of this as we would like to, and not nearly so much as we ought to do. The main requirements are that we should be able to move very quickly (and estimate the results quickly) and that the cost should be low enough so that it is not an obstacle to frequent use.

What I would like chiefly to emphasize is our feeling as a firm that public opinion research is of the greatest importance to the practice of good public relations counselling and to the development of our profession.

A CHALLENGE

"An American Legion survey of 500 veterans in Detroit showed that their V-J Day dreams failed to materialize. The average veteran had hoped for his own home, a new car, five suits, \$483 a month, and \$1,900 in the bank. Instead he rented a house at \$52 a month and he had a 1939 car, two suits, \$311 a month, and \$160 in the bank."

—*NEWSWEEK* (Sept. 13, 1948)

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"NONE OF US DARES STAND ALONE"

By GENERAL DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

President, Columbia University

FOREWORD

The Chinese say that there is a time for fishing and a time for drying the nets. Because Columbia University's President Eisenhower has so forcefully and so beautifully called for united action in behalf of civilization itself, the Journal proudly presents his induction speech as a classic statement of public relations in social action.

As you read the General's philosophy, you may wish to read in the words "public relations" where the original document mentions "democratic citizenship", or the responsibilities of a university.

General Eisenhower attains an almost terrifying clarity in his analysis of the indivisibility of human freedoms. Here speaks a mighty voice to still the minor dissidences of groups who want a specific freedom without accepting responsibility for the maintenance of all the inter-related freedoms.

The full impact of this speech and this philosophy may not be felt in our lifetimes. We in public relations must be peculiarly sensitive, however, to those milestones in human thought which determine directions for the social order. We may gratefully welcome Dwight Eisenhower, both as General and as University President, into the ranks of a profession whose future is so inextricably bound into the future of a civilization founded on individual human values. — HOWARD CHASE

... **A**MONG you are men and women from the learned professions, from the offices of management and finance, from labor unions, from the machines of factories, the shops of small towns, from the farms and the plain homes of America. No school, narrow in its outlook, fearful of the new, bogged down in sterile allegiance to the past, could provoke such a diverse assembly as is this.

Columbia welcomes you and will record with lasting pride the tribute of your presence.

I feel a sense of high personal distinction that I am privileged to participate in this ceremony. If this were a land where the military profession is a weapon of tyranny or aggression — its members an elite caste dedicated to its own perpetuation — a life-long soldier could hardly assume my present role. But in our nation the army is the servant of the people, designed and trained exclusively to protect our way of life. Duty in its ranks is an exercise of citizenship. Hence, among us, the soldier who becomes an educator or the teacher who becomes a soldier enters no foreign field but finds himself instead engaged in a new phase of his fundamental life purpose — the protection and perpetuation of basic human freedoms.

Today's challenge to freedom and to every free institution is such that none of us dares stand alone. For human freedom is today threatened by regimented statism. The threat is infinitely more than that involved in opposing ideologies. Men of widely divergent views in our own country live in peace together

because they share certain common aspirations which are more important to them than their differences. But democracy and the police state have no common purposes, methods, or aspirations. In today's struggle, no free man, no free institution can be neutral. All must be joined in a common profession—that of democratic citizenship; every institution within our national structure must contribute to the advancement of this profession.

Our Common Responsibility

The common responsibility of all Americans is to become effective, helpful participants in a way of life that blends and harmonizes the fiercely competitive demands of the individual and of society. The individual must be free, able to develop to the utmost of his ability, employing all opportunities that confront him for his own and his family's welfare; otherwise he is merely a cog in a machine. The society must be stable, assured against violent upheaval and revolution; otherwise it is nothing but a temporary truce with chaos. But freedom for the individual must never degenerate into the brutish struggle for survival that we call barbarism. Neither must the stability of society ever degenerate into the enchained servitude of the masses that we call statism.

Only when each individual, while seeking to develop his own talents and further his own good, at the same time protects his fellows against injury and cooperates with them for the common betterment—only then is the fullness of orderly, civilized life possible to the millions of men who live within a free nation.

The citizenship, which enables us to enjoy this fullness, is our most priceless heritage. By our possession and wise use of it, we enjoy freedom of body, intellect, and spirit, and in addition material richness beyond the boast of Babylon. To insure its perpetuation and

proper use is the first function of our educational system.

To blend, without coercion, the individual good and the common good is the essence of citizenship in a free country. This is truly an art whose principles must be learned. Like the other arts, perfection in its manifold details can never be attained. This makes it all the more necessary that its basic principles be understood in order that their application may keep pace with every change—natural, technological, social.

Democratic citizenship is concerned with the sum total of human relations. Here at home this includes the recognition of mutual dependence for liberty, livelihood and existence of more than 140 million human beings. Moreover, since we cannot isolate ourselves as a nation from the world, citizenship must be concerned too with the ceaseless impact of the globe's two billion humans upon one another, manifested in all the multitudinous acts and hopes and fears of humanity.

The educational system, therefore, can scarcely impose any logical limit upon its functions and responsibilities in preparing students for a life of social usefulness and individual satisfaction. The academic range must involve the entire material, intellectual and spiritual aspects of life.

Liberty Basis of Structure

Underlying this structure of knowledge and understanding is one immutable, incontestable fact: Time and again, over the span of the last 700 years, it has been proved that those who know our way of life place upon one thing greater value than upon any other—and that priceless thing is individual liberty. This requires a system of self-government, which recognizes that every person possesses certain inalienable rights and that rules and regulation for the common good may be imposed only by the ultimate authority of the citizens themselves.

This individual freedom is not the product of accident. To gain and retain it our forefathers have sacrificed material wealth, have undergone suffering, indeed have given life itself. So it is with us today.

But it is not enough merely to realize how freedom has been won. Essential also is it that we be ever alert to all threats to that freedom. Easy to recognize is the threat from without. Easy too is it to see the threat of those who advocate its destruction from within. Less easy is it to see the dangers that arise from our own failure to analyze and understand the implications of various economic, social, and political movements among ourselves. Here is a definite task for the teacher.

Thus, one danger arises from too great a concentration of power in the hands of any individual or any group: The power of concentrated finance, the power of selfish pressure groups, the power of any class organized in opposition to the whole—any one of these, if allowed to dominate is fully capable of destroying individual freedom as is excessive power concentrated in the political head of the state.

The concentration of too much power in centralized government need not be the result of violent revolution or great upheaval. A paternalistic government can gradually destroy, by suffocation in the immediate advantage of subsidy, the will of a people to maintain a high degree of individual responsibility. And the abdication of individual responsibility is inevitably followed by further concentration of power in the state. Government ownership or control of property is not to be decried principally because of the historic inefficiency of governmental management of productive enterprises; its real threat rests in the fact that, if carried to the logical extreme, the final concentration of ownership in the hands of government gives to it, in all practical effects, absolute power over our lives.

There are other internal dangers that require constant vigilance if they are to be avoided. If we permit extremes of wealth for a few and enduring poverty for many, we shall create social explosiveness and a demand for revolutionary change. If we do not eliminate selfish abuse of power by any one group, we can be certain that equally selfish retaliation by other groups will ensue. Never must we forget that ready cooperation in the solution of human problems is the only sure way to avoid forced governmental intervention.

All our cherished rights—the right of free speech, free worship, ownership of property, equality before the law—all these are mutually dependent for their existence. Thus, when shallow critics denounce the profit motive inherent in our system of private enterprise, they ignore the fact that it is an economic support of every human right we possess and that without it, all rights would soon disappear. There demagoguery, unless combatted by truth, can become as great a danger to freedom as exists in any other threat.

Macaulay's Warning Recalled

It was loss of unity through demagogic appeals to class selfishness, greed, and hate that Macaulay, the English historian, feared would lead to the extinction of our democratic form of government. More than ninety years ago he wrote of these fears to the American historian, H. S. Randall. In a letter of May 23, 1857 he wrote, ". . . when a society has entered on this downward progress, either civilization or liberty must perish. Either some Caesar or Napoleon will seize the reins of government with a strong hand; or your republic will be as fearfully plundered and laid waste by barbarians in the twentieth century as the Roman Empire was in the fifth; with this difference, that the Huns and Vandals who ravaged the Roman Empire came from without, and that your Huns and Van-

dals will have been engendered within your own country by your own institutions."

Must Have True Understanding

That day can never come if in our educational system we help our students gain a true understanding of our society, of the need for balance between individual desires and the general welfare, and of the imperative requirement that every citizen participate intelligently and effectively in democratic affairs. The broadest possible citizen understanding and responsibility is as necessary in our complex society as was mere literacy before the industrial revolution.

It follows, then, that every institution built by free men, including great universities, must be first of all concerned with the preservation and further development of human freedom—despite any contrary philosophy, or force that may be pitted against it.

At all levels of education, we must be constantly watchful that our schools do not become so engrossed in techniques, great varieties of fractionalized courses, highly specialized knowledge, and the size of their physical plant as to forget the principal purpose of education itself—to prepare the student for effective personal and social life in a free society. From the school at the crossroads to a university as great as Columbia, general education for citizenship must be the common and first purpose of them all.

I do not suggest less emphasis on pure research or on vocational or professional training; nor by any means am I suggesting that curricula should be reduced to the classical education of the nineteenth century. But I deeply believe that all of us must demand of our schools more emphasis on those fundamentals that make our free society what it is and that assure it boundless increase in the future if we comprehend and live by them.

Love of freedom, confidence in the efficacy of cooperative effort, optimism for the future, invincible conviction that the American way of life yields the greatest human values—to help the student build these attitudes not out of indoctrination but out of genuine understanding, may seem to some to be education in the obvious.

Of course, the reverse is true. There is a growing doubt among our people that democracy is able to cope with the social and economic trials that lie ahead. Among some is a stark fear that our way of life may succumb to the combined effects of creeping paralysis from within and aggressive assault from without.

Education the Only Solution

Fear of the future with a concomitant sense of insecurity and doubt of the validity of fundamental principles is a terrible development in American life—almost incredible in the immediate aftermath of America's most magnificent physical and spiritual triumphs. Only by education in the apparently obvious can doubt and fear be resolved.

Here lies a heavy obligation on Columbia University and all her sister schools; unless such fear is banished from our thinking, the sequel will be either the heavy curse of tyrannical regimentation or the collapse of our democratic civilization in social anarchy.

Love of freedom, confidence in cooperative effort, optimism, faith in the American way will live so long as our schools loyally devote themselves to a truly liberal education. To assign the university the mission of ever strengthening the foundations of our culture is to ennoble the institution and confirm the vital importance of its service.

Historical failures in the application of democratic principles must be as earnestly studied as the most brilliant of democracy's triumphs. But underlying all must be the clear conviction that the principles themselves have timeless

validity. Dependence by the country upon the schools for this vital service implies no infringement of academic freedom.

Academicians Must Support the Entire Free System

Indeed, academic freedom is nothing more than a specific application of the freedoms inherent in the American way of life. It follows that to protect academic freedom, the teacher must support the entire free system which, among other things, guarantees freedom for all. The teacher's obligation to seek and speak the truth is further safeguarded by university custom and commitment.

There will be no administrative suppression or distortion of any subject that merits a place in this University's curricula. The facts of communism, for example, shall be taught here—its ideological development, its political methods, its economic effects, its probable course in the future. The truth about communism is, today, an indispensable requirement if the true values of our democratic system are to be properly assessed. Ignorance of communism, fascism, or any other police-state philosophy is far more dangerous than ignorance of the most virulent disease.

Who among us can doubt the choice of future Americans, as between statism and freedom, if the truth concerning each be constantly held before their eyes? But if we, as adults, attempt to hide from the young the facts in this world struggle, not only will we be making a futile attempt to establish an intellectual "iron curtain," but we will arouse the lively suspicion that statism possesses virtues whose persuasive effect we fear.

Full Truth Is Needed Now

The truth is what we need—the full truth. Except for those few who may be using the doctrine of communism as a vehicle to personal power, the people who, in our country, accept commun-

ism's propaganda for truth are those most ignorant of its aims and practices. Enlightenment is not only a defender of our institutions, it is an aggressive force for the defeat of false ideologies.

America was born in rebellion, and rebellion against wrong and injustice is imbedded in the American temper. But whatever change our rebels of the American past may have sought, they were quick to proclaim it openly and fearlessly, preaching it from the house-tops. We need their sort, and here at Columbia we shall strive to develop them—informed, intelligent rebels against ignorance and imperfection and prejudice. But because they have sought the truth and know it, they will be loyal to the American way, to the democracy within which we live. They will never tire of seeking its advancement, however viciously they may be attacked by those content with the *status quo*. Their loyalty will be enhanced by each day they spend at Columbia.

The American university does not operate in an unreal world of its own, concerned solely with the abstract, secluded from the worrisome problems of workaday living, insulated against contact with those other institutions which constitute our national structure. Just as the preservation of the American way demands a working partnership among 146 million Americans, its continued development demands a working partnership between universities and all other free institutions.

Partners

The school, for example, that enjoys a partnership with the manufacturing industries and labor unions and mercantile establishments of its community is a better and more productive school in consequence of its non-academic associations. Its influence permeates the entire community and is multiplied many times over while the school itself, energized by the challenges and dynamism

of community life, grows and broadens with each problem it helps surmount.

Together, the university and the community—the entire record of human experience at their call, able to apply academic, technical and practical knowledge to the problem, joined in voluntary cooperative effort — together they can analyze, evaluate and plan. By such partnership, it is not too much to hope that the university—losing none of its own freedom, but rather extending its academic horizons—will in time help develop a new freedom for America—freedom from industrial strife.

Partnership is the proof and product of unity. In a free democracy, unity is obtained by our common approach to fundamental principles regardless of even sharp differences with regard to details. A unified America is the greatest temporal power yet seen upon the earth, a power dedicated to the betterment and happiness of all mankind. Columbia shares in that dedication.

Columbia University, like so many others, has been established and is voluntarily maintained and supported by free people. In no other environment could it in the space of two centuries have attained an international stature as a home of learning and research.

Columbia University, consequently, an independent gift-supported institution, free from political and sectarian obligation, will forever be bound by its loyalty to truth and the basic concepts of democratic freedom. It shall follow, then, that Columbia will always be characterized by: First, an undergraduate body of men and women, schooled in the broad expanse of human knowledge and humble in their heritage—resolute that they shall pass both on with some

increase. From among them will come scholars, executives, statesmen. But Columbia shall count it failure, whatever their success, if they are not all their lives a leaven of better citizenship.

Second, Columbia will be characterized by: a graduate body of men and women who, each in his own field, shall advance frontiers of knowledge and use the techniques of science in the service of humanity. From among them will come skilled surgeons, engineers, lawyers, teachers, and administrators, great leaders in every profession and science. But again, we shall count it failure, if they, by specialization, become blinded to human values and so ignore their fundamental duty as citizens.

Third, Columbia has been, is, and will be: a dynamic institution as a whole, dedicated to learning and research and to effective cooperation with all other free institutions which will aid in the preservation and strengthening of human dignity and happiness. Our way of life and our university are the flowering of centuries of effort and thought. Men of the ancient world—in Jerusalem and Athens and Rome; men of all epochs, all regions, and all faiths have contributed to the ideals and to the ideas that animate our thinking. Columbia University is, and shall continue, both heir of that past and a pioneer in its future increase.

My personal dedication is in the manner of my illustrious predecessors—who in late years have included—Seth Low, Nicholas Murray Butler, Frank Fackenthal—to devote my energies to the support of Columbia's able and distinguished faculty, in the service of America, in the service of all humanity. I thank you very much.

Shoemakers' Children

By EMILY S. NATHAN

The Firm of Emily S. Nathan — Helen Erskine, New York City

I AM still brought up short when I find an apparently intelligent acquaintance has selected a doctor because he met him at a party. The first time I heard this I assumed that the new patient had investigated his doctor's training and hospital connections. I was wrong. The selection was just what it appeared on the surface. A seemingly nice chap with mutual friends.

Well, if that is so I suppose I should not feel discouraged at the public's frequent lack of insight in its selection of public relations counsel. But I do. Principally because I feel that we, as public relations counsel, have done a poor job in educating the public in just what they should look for when they engage us. And also in how to use us once engaged.

Granted we have a lot of obstacles with which to contend: there are no official requirements to becoming a public relations counsel; no diplomas, no certificates, no state examinations, no licenses. Anyone can hang out his shingle and — if he is a good salesman with a glib tongue — sign up substantial clients. True he may find trained people to work for him. But in the end if he has no keen understanding of his own work, no sound knowledge of its techniques, no experience in its skills, he can only harm the business he is in. And that means you and me.

How can we overcome this?

First by educating the people in public relations and making them aware of its requirements. We will always suffer from the barkers on the fringe. What then can we do in educating the public about us? That is our challenge.

Here too we have strikes against us. There are still editors, opinion molders,

radio commentators who have become just as allergic to the words *public relations* as the old time city editor was to *press agent*. And rightly so. I am a bit allergic myself. Public relations has come to mean practically anything — from lobbying to plain press agency — and neither one necessarily skilled. And is public relations a business or a profession?

As far as the general public is concerned there are vast numbers who think of public relations as something completely abstract. Sort of a combination of abracadabra and valuable contacts. If they buy it, it is often against their better judgment, just to try and see how it works. And as they are just as apt to buy the wrong kind as not, it frequently does not work. Then for them, and the hundreds of people they see and talk with, public relations is forever in ill repute.

Because they have suffered from poor counsel and poor service the best they can say is that public relations is an intangible. They cannot see that it is no less tangible than retaining legal counsel to keep out of trouble. They have not experienced its positive aspects of sound creation of those priceless commodities — good will and good human relations; nor its further purpose — consumer understanding and consequent desire for a product whether that product is an idea or something for household use.

We still meet vice presidents in charge of marketing who tell us they have too many other things to get done before they tackle a public relations program. It is on their list but headed "when time." Too often that attitude is primar-

ily due to our negligence in applying our own techniques of consumer understanding to ourselves.

As We Would for Clients

Why not plan an educational program about ourselves as we would for clients? All of us realize it won't succeed overnight. Let us plan and place some down to earth popular articles, written and by-lined by top people, illustrated with colorful incidents and material, explaining in a general way new techniques and media, and skillful uses of old. We know they work but how many others know it?

We read popular articles written by judges, lawyers, doctors. We read articles on business and industry. Why not read something about our activity?

We have enough of a past to make good article material with public relations woven in as a vital outgrowth of a wide background. We have enough material for a series of broadcasts in our chapter communities.

Obvious perhaps. But have we ever done any of this on an organized national basis?

We can make PRSA meetings and clinics examples of good programing and management; and the publicity that comes out of them something for the lay fellow to get his teeth in. Plain talk is needed.

We have a new national society. Those of us in the profession are watching it carefully. Will it develop under strong leadership into a professional body that will carry weight? Can we as a group develop a program that will win the respect and understanding of present and potential clients, of the heads of the media we use, of the men and women in the profession and the young ones coming up?

It's a long range job but I think it can be done. And if done properly it will take care of problem number two—how to use us once engaged.

Am I stepping on the heels of new PRSA plans? If so, I'm glad.

Welcome to New Members

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Public Relations Society of America, Inc., held in the Society's offices on October 18, 1948, the following individual was unanimously elected to membership in the Society, following the required posting of his application:



ELECTED TO ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

Ward, Frank N.—Assistant Vice President, People's National Bank of Washington, Seattle, Washington.

If You Want Professional Status

By
MARK OGDEN

ACTUALLY, only a few occupational groups have achieved general acceptance as professions. Their successes were gained by surmounting many obstacles; after resolving bitter internal conflicts and subduing outside opposition with years of ethical performance.

Therefore, if Public Relations gains recognition as a profession beyond its own circle, it is safe to assume that this will be accomplished only after extensive and coordinated effort by individuals and groups. Since we are the individuals to do the work and to profit from it, an examination of some of the problems that are certain to arise seems in order.

Just what long-range steps must be taken has not been settled, but here are five proposals that lead in the direction of our goal:

- 1) Adoption of high entry standards . . . covering education, experience, levels of services offered, and reputation . . . which candidates must fulfil before being accepted as bona fide Public Relations counsels.
- 2) Adoption of a code of ethics which members and candidates will agree to observe.
- 3) Support of an organization with power to enforce adherence to entrance requirements and the code of ethics.
- 4) Execution of an internal education program to guide members in practicing Public Relations on a professional level.
- 5) Execution of an informational campaign to establish the fact that Public Relations is a profession.

The intent above is to outline the total problem which will require the coordinated efforts of several committees and many persons. The intent below is to enumerate some, not all, of the questions which we may anticipate. No effort will be made to pursue each question to a decision. Rather, the attempt will be to *indicate* problems in the hope of adding impetus to current exploratory discussions.

1. Entry Standards

The PRSA has its Eligibility Committee to pass on applications for membership in the Society, and to designate the type of membership each applicant is entitled to hold. When we think of standards on the plane of the medical and legal professions, for example, this question naturally arises: Are our entrance requirements rigid enough, and are our investigations of applications sufficient to make admission to PRSA *prima facie* evidence of professional status?

We might consider a few other questions before answering that one.

a) *Education.* Is it not taken for granted that a professional man holds several college degrees? Can we afford to overlook this fact for long?

Not degrees alone, but distinguishing degrees are awarded by universities in such fields as the ministry, medicine, law and dentistry. To remind us of the distance Public Relations must travel, remember that some professions are so firmly entrenched that they dictate requirements which universities must meet before they are accredited to grant distinguishing degrees. And today, it is

still news when a university announces the addition of a single specific Public Relations course to its curriculum.

In this area, another problem arises. The majority of leading Public Relations counsels were long gone from college before the words "public relations" were linked to form a generic name. If an academic requirement is deemed necessary, will it not be advisable to make it double-edged? Public Relations veterans might be permitted to substitute years of pertinent experience for lack of college years. High academic training in prescribed courses then could be required of youths planning to enter the field who have all or a majority of their college years ahead of them.

b) Experience. Eventually, the experience factor may be disregarded, but in this early stage of our emergence as a profession, it must be considered.

Several questions relating to experience arise. For example, should an individual be allowed to earn his professional status by experience alone? Or, is a combination of specific training plus pertinent experience a better requirement? If the time comes when universities award degrees in Public Relations, shall an "internship" also be required?

If pioneer leaders in Public Relations are allowed to substitute experience for college credits in order to be granted full professional standing, what types of experience are acceptable? If there be agreement on public relations, journalism, advertising and management, how about sales promotion, personnel management, radio, research, and public administration?

c) Services Offered. Today, we find legislative payoffs, political fixers, circus press agents, and cafe society check-grabbers abusing the words "public relations" by incorporating them in their self-selected titles. On a much higher level, but still far short of professionalism, are those who produce legitimate

publicity, conduct fund-raising campaigns, promote circulation-building stunts, and do other specialized jobs wherein they employ a few Public Relations techniques. Operators of these types attract more attention than counsels who practice Public Relations on a professional level. It is small wonder that the public is not more confused and more cynical than is now the case.

Among our duties is that of informing the public of the real services offered by Public Relations. Then the public would be able to make the same distinction that is obvious to us. But first we must define a few terms and identify the Public Relations services that are truly professional. We must standardize on criteria for evaluating services. In the field of accountancy, for example, the highest level of responsible, objective work is performed by Certified Public Accountants. In addition, there are Public Accountants, accountants, bookkeepers, and clerks to do the detailed, mechanical, and specialized phases of the work.

When some of these matters are settled, we can take steps to keep the word mechanics and stunt men from parading under our banner. Solving just this one problem will carry Public Relations a long way toward professional status.

d) Reputation. Education, experience, and skill are the endowments of many persons both in and out of professional fields. But the professions are distinguished by something less tangible. Throughout the codes of ethics of all professions will be found these terms: integrity, responsibility, dignity, honor, impartiality.

Why do you place such confidence in a doctor who may be a stranger to you? You don't ask to see his diplomas, testimonial letters, and a graphic presentation of the method he proposes to use in opening your abdomen. Don't you, as well as your surgeon, lean heavily on the reputation of the medical profession?

Would the medical profession enjoy this high repute if it admitted poor credit risks and moral perverts? How does the medical profession manage to admit only persons of unquestioned reputation, help members maintain their reputations, and eliminate the occasional members who degenerate?

To win professional status, Public Relations must learn the answers to the above questions, and apply the solutions to its own field. It must establish criteria for measuring reputation; create the mechanics for applying these measurements; and find means for policing the professional behaviors of members.

2. Code of Ethics

When fledgling doctors are admitted to the practice of medicine, they swear to observe the Oath of Hippocrates which dates from the fourth century before Christ. The Oath is pertinent and impressive even in this sophisticated age. It has a traditional value that a new credo would lack. Its continued use undoubtedly has contributed much toward bringing medicine to the highest level of professionalism.

About a quarter of a century ago, American crafts and industries became imbued with ethical fervor and began adopting pledges and codes on every hand. Many of these were of the resounding credal type. Later, however, as business grew increasingly complex and competitive, these generalities and platitudes, invariably stated in high-flown language, were found inadequate. Guidance was needed for handling specific, recurring business situations, and language was required which could be interpreted in only one way. The result is that today there are hundreds of professional and industrial codes of conduct which spell out in detail the correct action in nearly all matters involving ethics.

Some codes are enunciated in manda-

tory tones while others approach the subject more diplomatically and are either advisory or cautionary.

In addition to its Oath of Hippocrates, the American Medical Association has its Principles of Medical Practice. The American Bar Association has its lengthy Canons of Ethics. In fact every trade association and professional society of any consequence has its code of ethics.

A few of the most applicable subjects covered by these various codes are mentioned here to stimulate discussions which should culminate in a Public Relations code of ethics of sufficient vigor to assure us professional status.

a) Obligations. Maintenance of the honor and dignity of the profession; support of state and national professional societies; responsibility for the general welfare; and duty to clients, colleagues and competitors are among the topics covered.

b) Deportment. Gentlemanly conduct, personal appearance, decorum, punctuality, and ostracism of questionable characters are samples of the items mentioned in the various codes.

c) Advertising. The professions consider it undignified and unfair to advertise their talents and services. Some codes even detail how lettering on doors, listings in directories, and printing of stationery can be done in an ethical manner.

d) Secrecy. The preservation of confidential information obtained in dealings with clients is a must for all professional codes.

e) Compensation. No formula for setting fees is stated. The extent and value of services rendered, not the ability of the client to pay, are basic factors in computing fees. There are warnings against contract fees, excessive charges, cutting prices, accepting fees from opposing parties, and taking gifts, employee discounts, etc., from clients. Fees are never to be contingent on results.

f) Objectivity. Freedom from any self-interest in the outcome of a problem upon which a professional man is working gets important mention in all codes. Advice is to be given conscientiously, is to be based on impartial findings, and is to disregard the element of popularity with the client.

g) Competition. The professions seem to be organized primarily to prevent any competitive practices. When called in for consultation or during an emergency, the true professional bends over backwards to efface himself and leave the client securely attached to his regular practitioner. One must investigate and get clearance before replacing a fellow counsel. And there are to be no injurious words or deeds directed toward a fellow member.

h) Miscellaneous. It is the mark of a professional to keep abreast of developments in his field. He reads professional journals and engages in study, research, clinics, etc. He assists universities devoted to perpetuating knowledge of his profession. He uses his talents and education freely for social betterment. He is sincerely concerned over the welfare of fellow members and the families of deceased or infirm members.

3. Enforcement of Standards

Heated debates will complicate the development of, and the progressive changes in, Public Relations entry standards and rules of conduct. But solving these vital problems will ultimately appear as child's play in comparison with the much more important and unwieldy matter of enforcement. However, until there is rigid enforcement of rigid rules, Public Relations will not achieve the degree of professionalization that we all desire.

a) Legal Authority. Pharmacists, public school teachers, engineers, accountants are among the occupational groups that are examined and licensed by state boards. College professors, who

are not licensed, enjoy professional status, while public school teachers, as a class, are generally thought of as being semi-professionals at best.

When Public Relations is ready to consider such matter, it is not likely that practitioners will choose to become dependent on politicians to pass laws for disciplining their practices. In fact, this would seem to be a last resource for ridding the field of charlatans.

b) Self-discipline. A critical test for true professionalism is to measure the ability and authority of an occupational group to establish and enforce high standards for admission and practice. A profession that is strong enough to make and enforce its own eligibility and performance standards on a sufficiently high level will have little further trouble in winning public recognition.

Is a single national organization essential to setting and enforcing high standards? If dual societies continue to exist, are there means of coordinating efforts aimed at professionalization? Can enforcement be effective when there are no state societies and only a few local chapters?

Here are some other pertinent questions that must be decided:

- 1) When a code is adopted, who will issue interpretations in reply to inquiries, and who will write interim rules to cover points not mentioned in the code?
- 2) When clients and members have complaints or grievances against practitioners, to whom and in what form will these be submitted?
- 3) Who has the time to investigate serious charges of code violations brought against fellow members?
- 4) What is to be done when non-members engage in unethical practices to the detriment of members and the profession?
- 5) Will member violators of the code be admonished, suspended or ex-

pelled; who is to decide; and how will the seriousness of the offense be measured?

- 6) Who will notify the membership of interpretations, new rules, changes in rules, and the punishment inflicted on violators?

These questions are asked to indicate that enforcement machinery is essential, that great responsibility is involved, that enforcement will demand time and courage.

4. Membership Education

The Education Committee of PRSA can do as much or more than any other group to attain and maintain professionalization in the field of Public Relations. Members will have to be conditioned for professionalism both before and after rules for ethical conduct are adopted. Members can be guided in identifying and avoiding reprehensive and unethical conduct by means of resolutions, reports, articles, programs and letters. Education along these lines must be a dynamic, continuous project. There always will be new members as well as new rules for new situations.

5. Public Education

Convincing all men that Public Relations is a profession cannot be accom-

plished quickly and by a single act. A combination of effort and planned actions will be necessary. Most important, of course, will be public evidence of sincerity, integrity, and efficiency through the daily performances of professionally imbued practitioners.

Any public information campaign that is devised must be handled with due regard for professional abhorrence of advertising. But there should be a dignified, coordinated, carefully planned program for getting this message delivered, supported by all officers, committees and members of the PRSA.

This article was written largely to emphasize the magnitude of a project about which most of us have just begun to think. But it is only fair to conclude by mentioning several highly encouraging factors. In the first place, Public Relations by nature has all the attributes of a profession. Next, we are tackling a typical public relations problem in striving for recognition as a professional class; it is a problem we are perfectly qualified to solve. Then we have this great advantage over pioneer professions—by studying their experiences we can minimize the time and motion they lost. Finally, we already have an excellent start with a vigorous, growing Society forming the embryo from which a new profession soon can emerge.

Editor's Note: MARK OGDEN has produced a stimulating and provocative article on the important subject of professional standards. In it he has assembled many of the elements of the overall problem and has identified each separate element. Its great value is to focus attention on the fundamentals involved and suggest some possible approaches to the problem. Mr. Ogden is vice president of Spencer Curtiss, Inc., Indianapolis, Indiana.

THE WEATHERVANE

By
GEORGE DICKSON SKINNER

LET'S TAKE STOCK OF THE STOCKHOLDERS

THIS is open season on annual reports to stockholders. In recent years, the heaviest shooting has been done about the time of the *Financial World* dinner with the "Oscar of Industry" award to flush the game. This year, however, the season really began in July. Ever since the Controllershship Foundation announced the results of Elmo Roper's survey, there's been a lot of shooting.

Much of it has been pretty wide of the mark. Public relations men have worked hard to make the annual report an effective means of communication between management and a widely diffused ownership. The modern type of report has become a favorite child of the profession, and the fond parent has rushed to its defense in a manner which at times was characteristic of fond parents.

Unfortunately, such an attitude was invited by some expressions used in the summary of the findings — expressions not justified by the survey itself. The report says:

"The typical reaction of the run-of-the-mine stockholders to the fancy brochures he receives annually from the companies, ranges from boredom to cursory interest."

Actually, the tabulated results of the survey nowhere indicate that the people interviewed were talking about "fancy brochures" or any other particular kind of report. They were questioned about the reports they received last year from their "favorite company."

What the Survey Doesn't Tell

Analysis of the survey results themselves carries an implication in favor of the modern type of report, although it is too sketchy to be more than an implication. The summary says:

"There is a total of 40% of the stockholder body who profess to find no utility in the brochures they receive from their favorite companies."

"Modern Corporate Reports,"* after citing tabulations made by *Financial World*, says:

"At least two out of three corporations are still sending their stockholders cut-and-dried certified financial statements as their annual reports."

On that basis, public relations men should not be surprised if the survey showed that the stockholders who find "no utility" in the reports were closer to 67% than to 40% of the total.

Most specific criticisms by those interviewed seem to have been on the line that the reports are "difficult to understand," "not interesting," "too complicated." Those are precisely the criticisms that the modern type of report seeks to avoid. It seems probable that, if it were not for the one modern type out of every three reports, the survey would have revealed an even higher percentage of bored stockholders.

That is no more than a fairly reason-

* Lillian Doris; Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1948

able guess, however. The summary doesn't tell us. As the survey was planned, there is no possible way to distinguish between stockholder attitudes toward different types of report. Of all those interviewed, approximately 35 per cent owned stock in only one company. Each of them had only one report to talk about, and there is nothing but the tabulation of attitudes to suggest what type of report it was.

For this reason, the survey is meaningless as a direct commentary on the new techniques which some corporations have adopted.

Modernization

Nevertheless, the survey does have value. If we overlook some unfortunate words that were tossed at our pet infant, we shall find ground for very cool thought.

The Controllershship Foundation sought to discover "What People Want to Know about Your Company." That's the title of the report. The survey treated the stockholders as one of five interested publics.

But that has not been the public relations approach to the annual report. We have been concerned, not with what people want to know, but with what we and our clients want them to know and to think. "Modern Corporate Reports" asserts that a good annual report can "make friends for the corporation among all the groups with whom the company has any contact . . . create confidence in the corporation that will discourage hasty liquidation of its securities . . . interest stockholders in promoting the company's products and services . . . create fresh investor interest in the company" and so forth. Those have been our avowed objectives.

The Controllershship Foundation survey has done a useful thing in reversing that point of view. Let's forget for a moment what we want to say and give thought to what the stockholder wants to hear.

Formula for a Best Seller

One public relations leader, commenting on the survey report, said, "It's what you might expect from a bunch of controllers. After all, the first job of an annual report is to get itself read."

And a prominent accountant retorted, "I'll tell you how to get the report read by every stockholder: Have all your figures in the red!"

According to Mr. Roper's figures, the accountant was right. The average stockholder has little or no interest in financial data in any form except profits paid or likely to be paid to him in dividends. Tell him in simple language that his company is sound and you can use the financial statements to swat flies or swab out the frying pan. The survey figures are so clear on this point that the controllers really seem shocked. The report says:

"The number who evidence enough sophistication to concern themselves with balance sheet items are pitifully small."

Second Thoughts

What moves the Controllershship Foundation to pity should at least move a public relations man to scratch his head in thought.

Is it possible that we have been trying to use the annual report as a vehicle for messages that would be delivered more effectively otherwise?

The stockholders show an undeniable aversion to the forms and language of accounting. A large part of them seem unable to grasp even the basic ideas. Yet no matter how it may be "modernized" — simplified with animated charts, told in eighth-grade words, the core and central theme of any annual report must be statistical. Are we well advised to choose such a document as the medium for our public relations message?

We've sweated to make the stockholder understand the figures that baffle

him. In light of this survey, we have to ask ourselves what is gained by the effort. The average stockholder appears incapable of judging the significance of a set of figures even when he understands them. To have meaning, they still have to be interpreted for him. If he is satisfied with the interpretation, do we gain anything by trying to force the analysis upon him like a teacher laboring with an unwilling pupil?

There is no evidence that financial statistics have any bearing on the loyalty of the average stockholder to the corporation. The large investor seeks more information than any annual report ever gave, and the report is not planned for him. The "modernizing" efforts have been aimed at the average stockholder for the purpose of gaining and holding his active good will. It seems clear that the statistical core of an annual report is no help in that purpose. It seems possible that it may even be a hindrance.

The Stockholder's Ear

In conclusion, the survey report suggests two new types of document for "run-of-the-mine stockholders" in place of the present annual report. One would be a short letter from the president

giving the earnings for the past year, an interpretation of the current financial condition and, perhaps, some estimate of the next year's prospects. The other would be a publication about the company "designed to do for stockholders what the employee's house organ does for the working force." Besides being freed from the grip of statistics, the latter offers the added advantage of more frequent communication than an annual report.

Actually, this idea in one form or another has been followed by at least a few corporations for some time.

Even before the Roper survey was completed, some of the largest corporations had obviously decided there was need for some radically new approach to the stockholder. At least five annual reports submitted in this year's *Financial World* contest were in motion picture form.

No form can meet the circumstances of all corporations, but the Controllership Foundation survey has done us one real service in the search for effective forms. It has reminded us that, if we're going to get the stockholder's ear we've got to talk his language — and that's not the language of finance.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A NEW PROFESSION

THE FOREGOING is the title of one of the significant papers to be presented before the First Annual Conference of the Public Relations Society of America in Chicago November 15-17. It is the subject of the speech by Mr. Lawrence A. Appley, President of the American Management Association. He knows business and he knows public relations' importance to business.

Other important addresses and discussions will deal with problems of the growing public relations profession in the areas of education, research, and professional standards. If you have not already made your reservations for this important Conference of our Society, send it at once to William R. Harshe, Conference Chairman, 8 South Dearborn Street, Chicago 3, Illinois.

The P.R. Problems of Business

NEW or ANCIENT?

By HENRY von MORPURGO

President, Henry von Morpurgo, Inc., Public and Industrial Relations, San Francisco

- PART TWO -

The Businessman's Cities Are Destroyed

The ancient businessman had enemies on all sides of him. Every time he gained a little stature, wealth or prominence, someone knocked him down.

The Soldier-City-State of Rome hated the trader. It went out and destroyed the two great merchant cities of Corinth and Carthage.

In the days of Ancient Greece the property owners were periodically hit by public action with regular repudiation of debts, debasements of the coinage and tariff increase of as high as 50%.

Throughout most of the history of Athens, Sparta and Rome, merchants and businessmen were debarred from the important deliberations and posts of government. The communities condemned their means of livelihood.

Egyptians, Athenians, Spartans and Romans were agrarian-minded folk, and they considered engaging in trade a dishonorable business. The necessary ocean-going trade for Athens was conducted by foreigners who lived at the port town of Piraeus and were held in a non-citizen second-class rating. They could not seek the aid of courts nor own land nor marry the daughter of a citizen.

In ancient Egyptian Thebes a trader could only seek political office if he had not engaged in trade for at least ten years.

Plato Wants More Debasement

In his *Republic*, the outline of the perfect State by the philosopher Plato, he recommended that the trader be still further debased. He was consigned to living forever among the lowliest of the laborers, and he was to be forever held down in an iron-clad lowly caste. Plato preached the abolition of bank deposits, interest on loans and other commercial practices.

The businessman had to endure other indignities and defeats. In time some few great commercial cities rose, but they were not to endure for long, and they and their citizens were constantly plagued by the types that did not like them.

The businessmen, their communities, like Sybaris and Sardis, and their customs were ridiculed by the writers of ancient songs.

The Ionian cities were among the few that respected trade. Here individualism, the great perennial trait of the businessman, flourished, but also proved his undoing. Individualism prevented the Ionians from cooperating in establishing a defense system, and so the Ionians fell to their enemies. For precisely the same inability to cooperate, the independent Twelve Etruscan Cities later dropped one after another under the attack of Rome.

The luxurious and ostentatious living

and the immorality of the prosperous men and women were also exaggerated, distorted, and reviled by the Roman historians. Their descriptions have the familiar ring of a *Pravda* description of the life of a capitalist in an American city today. Literature of that day inaccurately describes the businessmen as corrupt, sordid, cruel, gay, tipsy, wanton, wasteful, and given to effete, expensive and treacherous habits.

The political jobs of the great mercantile city of Carthage were criticized as being the monopoly of the three hundred wealthiest families. Sounds familiarly like the remarks about the "Sixty Families That Rule America", doesn't it? Or the "200 First Families of France", the "200 of Britain", and the "100 of Pre-war Germany", all touted to rule their countries.

The Merchant Cities Are Crushed

The greatest blow to the prestige of the businessman, from which he has never recovered, occurred when the rich merchant cities were crushed by the poor peasant farming societies. The Greeks defeated the Carthaginians and Etruscans in the sea battle of Himera, and the ships of the Persians outfitted by the Phoenicians were sunk at Salamis. Athens and Sparta, who detested the businessman, won.

The Romans systematically destroyed the trader cities of Corinth, Carthage, Alexandria, Rhodes and Palmyra.

Rome, governed by men of the farm and war, for the length of her long imperial rule suppressed the businessman politically and socially. Her historians, who established and formalized the pattern of historical reporting, eulogized the conquering farmer and soldier and ridiculed the trader and businessman.

Then, when the Roman Empire fell, the Roman Catholic Church followed Rome's lead in suppressing the businessman. Until 1830 the Church de-

nounced interest being paid on capital. The Church's influence kept the businessman's prestige low.

Ancient War Contractor Investigations

In the Second Punic War, the Roman Senate held an investigation of corrupt war contractors who had provided the State with unseaworthy vessels with worthless contents, which were scuttled. The ships and cargoes were insured, and the owners demanded damages.

The munitions makers for Rome's legions, like Piso, found their profit-making condemned by political orators like Cicero.

Predatory Roman traders were so extortionate in their dealings with the primitive citizens of Gaul that the latter rose under Vercingetorix and murdered the traders. Uprisings occurred because of high rates of interest demanded on loans. One such was directed against the money-lending philosopher Seneca by the Britons in 60 A.D., because of the harsh terms of his loans.

Crassus, the richest man of Rome, founded a fire-fighting company. Then made huge profits and huger enmities by requiring his fire chiefs to obtain the best bargain from the victims of fires before trying to put out the flames.

Pliny complained in the Forum about the price-fixing that went on among the clothiers of Rome. Trade agreements to stabilize prices by setting production limits were also exposed. These ancient writings sound like the economic reporting in the current *CIO News* and *CIO Economic Outlook*.

The Roman armies got out of hand and wandered and sacked many wealthy and industrious towns. Businessmen stopped producing, demand outstripped production, and inflation set in. Then the government tried to stimulate production and enterprise through law, regulations and bestowing of public honors. It failed because the businessman could

not make or keep a profit, so he slipped away to safer areas.

The Workers Rise Against the Businessman

In a few parts of medieval Europe, in trading cities the merchant class did manage to rise to prominence, independence, and rule. There artisans' guilds tried hard to enter the political arena in the cities of the merchant rulers. In 1359 in Bruges, red-hatted revolutionists attacked the city. A "labor government" took over for a short time, but was soon ousted.

Worker revolts like this were frequent and violent in the manufacturing centers of Flanders. While his laborers assaulted the businessman inside the cities, the agrarian feudal knights simultaneously attacked his walled cities from the outside.

In the 14th century the worker outbursts against the masters in the great and powerful weaving city of Ypres were so violent that the working people were ordered to vacate the city and live outside the walls. While they were residing there, the feudal knights attacked the workers and massacred them.

Anti-Labor Movements: Action and Reaction

The handicraft manufacturing capital of all medieval Germany, Nürnberg, was monstrously anti-labor. The burghers permitted no guild organizations. The council of patricians arbitrarily handed down rules and regulations which had to be accepted. Workers were even denied the privilege of having a meeting-place.

During the 14th and 15th centuries, the handicraft centers of France, Italy, England, Germany and Flanders were swept by rebellions of weavers, seamen, metal workers, cobblers and other workmen. The outbursts were not only for better pay but also for better working

conditions. To offset these revolts, the businessmen formed self-defense associations, such as the Brotherhood of the Golden Circle.

Little by little in the medieval guild cities regulations sprang up that governed the life of the businessman, including standards of fair treatment of apprentices and employees.

The medieval villages complained that the great trade centers crushed the village industries through unfair competition. In reverse the great Flemish community of Ypres sued the village of Poperinghe for unfair imitation of Ypres standards of cloth.

However, while feudal castles were still stone tenements, the businessmen rulers of the medieval cities began to improve their cities to better trade. Streets were paved, some lighting installed, building codes set up, fire departments, charity hospitals, relief programs and poor houses were established.

Industrial Statesmanship in Demand

The merchant city of Lübeck in northern Germany, chief of the Hanseatic League from the 13th to the 17th century, had one of the most trying problems ever faced in relationships with the agrarian feudal interests. The fierce northern knights returning from the Crusades looked upon the city as fair game, so the city, at great expense, became heavily fortified.

Lübeck, like most of the Hanseatic merchant towns, was greatly overcrowded, as were Cologne, Nürnberg, and the others. This was partly caused by defense needs, but it did not make for pleasant living—especially for the poorer classes.

In 1417 the Hanse outlawed speculating in grain, advertising and hawking of goods were forbidden, prices were regulated and so were the numbers admitted to trading privileges. Standards of grading merchandise and codes of business conduct were set.

The tough Hanseatic leaders were inveighed against as ruthless in their dealings with their handicraft workers and smaller businessmen.

Industrial statesmanship of the highest order was called upon to keep peace between the cities, at the highest point 90 of them, in the Hanseatic League. They quarreled about their seating arrangements at meetings, about the fairness of assessments, and allegedly unfair regulations.

Cheap Commercialism of the Arts

The businessman in the 1400's in Germany was the first to put art on a mass production basis through adoption of the printing press. Classics began being turned out in quantity and were made available to the poorer classes. The "fine and lordly folk" deplored this cheap commercialism of culture.

Burgomasters also had to be army officers. In the 14th century the clothier and mayor, Johann Wittenborg, was sentenced to death because he not only generalised his troops badly but profiteered in illicit trade with boycotted Flanders at the same time.

The Hanseatic League failed to suppress the contraband munitions trade, which ultimately contributed to the downfall of the cities and their association. The cities made cannons and munitions and sold them to their feudal enemies and loaned them technicians, the sales engineers of today, who later employed the arms to beat down the stone wall of the cities and to conquer the League cities.

The Merchants of Venice and Florence and Public Opinion

The merchants of Venice were treated as fifth-columnists, henchmen and munitions suppliers to the warring Asiatic hordes of the Turks, Moslems and Mongols. For 700 years these Asiatics, helped by the Venetians for money and profit, fought against Western Europe,

destroying countless thousands of the finest European youths, and finally triumphed, sweeping over much of Europe. So greatly did the Venetian traders defy public opinion that the Vatican issued bans against them. The merchants of Venice organized the Fourth Crusade, a venture most profitable to them, in which they assaulted and looted the Christian Empire and its capital, Constantinople, instead of warring against the Infidel.

In medieval Florence, the merchants were accused of profiteering at the expense of the neighboring noble farmers. Their excessive greed inflamed the poet Dante to protest, and he was banished from Florence. Dante got his revenge by consigning the usurious money lenders many levels down in his famous "Inferno".

Labor unrest and class hatreds against the masters prevailed constantly in Florence. Florence banned all labor unions. Agitators, many of them monks, were active, among them St. Francis of Assisi, who preached against private property and for Franciscan Christian Communism.

How to Beat the Competition

Violence popped up often in Florentine business dealings, including dagger assassinations of competitors, inciting mobs to riot and destroying the property of competitors, conspiracies, and the slaying of workingmen by their employers. (The Medicis were particularly adept at this business art.)

In the midst of a depression and mass unemployment, the rich merchants installed the Duke of Athens as a "strong man" dictator to suppress the workers.

A labor government, however, did appear in Florence in 1378 but was overthrown in 1382.

Lorenzo Medici conducted his business affairs so ruthlessly through monopolies, assassinations, intrigue, usury and every other unethical and wicked

device that when he died, the monk Savonarola refused him the last sacrament. Savonarola emerged the vocal enemy of Big Business. He himself took over the rule of the city demoralized through the extortions of the Medicis.

To stabilize and increase their income and conditions, the businessmen of Florence and Venice formed a cartel for the division of the market of all Northern Italy.

In 14th century Florence tax evasion by businessmen was so open it had become a fad. When the wool-combers sought to unionize to get better wages and conditions, the employers beheaded one organizer. The workers reacted with violence and for a while seized the city, but they were ultimately overcome.

Other Problems for the Businessman

As history sped on, the public relations problems of businessmen tumbled down on them one after another. Throughout the Middle Ages there was constant friction between the Church, which desired stability, and the Businessmen, who, with their ambitions, were an unsettling influence.

In 1496 in Germany a big strike occurred in the mines. To settle it, it was decided to execute the ten leaders of the miners and three company officials.

In England between 1344 and 1381 an effort was made to enslave workers through the Statute of Laborers. In the same period John Ball, Wat Tyler and Jack Straw led agrarian communist uprisings. In the period of unrest between 1540 and 1660, many communists appeared among the Diggers and Levellers.

Between 1520-1600 a great inflation took place, caused by the vast treasure stores of American gold and silver put into circulation in Europe through Spain. There were countless peasant and worker revolts, and a rebellion of Moorish serfs in Spain, which were ruthlessly put down. When the uncontrolled inflation was over at the end of the 16th

century, mighty Spain was weak.

In 1547 in Genoa and Augsburg the craftsmen and townsmen revolted against the merchants. Schwartz, a labor organizer, was elected and re-elected burgomaster. The emperor of Germany was finally called upon for help by the businessmen, and he and his military suppressed Schwartz and his followers.

In the 16th century a great speculative boom swept France, started by public loans. In 1577 the French government stopped payment on interest and capital, and the nation was bankrupt. Two hundred years later, John Law started a State bank, followed again by a boom and a bust. Spain, the Netherlands and Portugal also suffered from financial booms. Much of Europe was hurt both times, and great privation followed.

Booms, Busts—Then Plans for the Economy

There were similar booms and busts in time, based on fantastic stock schemes running from the weird Antwerp Clock to the "Railroad Bubble", "An American Dream", and the "California Gold Rush" Booms. The depressions of the 20th century are not a new invention.

Interestingly, every great panic has been followed by philosophers, idealists, militarists, theologians and others advocating a planned economy. Just as the "New Deal", with its ideas for a planned economy, came in with the political administration that followed after the '29 crash. No matter who caused the crash, the businessmen always received most of the blame. After the 1929 world-wide crash, assemblies of ministers in America blamed the selfishness of those in the high stations in business.

Part I of Mr. von Mörpurgo's interesting historical article appeared in the October Journal. Part III — the conclusion — will appear in the December issue.

WALTER BAKER PLANT TOUR

A Case History

By JEAN GORDON

Area Manager, Public Relations Department, General Foods Corporation

LIKE PLENTY OF OTHER COMPANIES, Walter Baker Division of General Foods has conducted plant tours for years. They were interesting enough — like tours you've taken many times, where you saw the plant and how the products were made.

About a year and a half ago, with the invited assistance of the headquarters public relations staff, the company made an "audit" of its relations with the community. It resulted in a decision, among other things to revise and modernize the plant tour. Why? Because we were beginning to hear about new techniques for plant tours. And we were increasingly aware that the old methods weren't good enough for the 1948 community job we had to tackle.

Now about three-quarters of our plant visitors are women — mostly church and fraternal groups — so we accented the tour accordingly. We attempted to look at Walter Baker through the eyes of a housewife — to tell and show her things which demonstrate that she and the company share common interests. And we tried to *humanize* the business. With invaluable help from Opinion Research Corporation, we worked out a tour script and simple visualizations.

I'm going to give you just a little of the content of the tour story — just a snatch or two that illustrates how we tried to get across a few of its elements.

Our plant visitors are greeted by the company's personnel manager — who, incidentally, has a way of making them feel he's genuinely glad to see them. He strikes the keynote by saying something like this: "Most of you have probably

passed by this plant a good many times. If you thought of it at all, you may have thought of Walter Baker as principally a group of buildings, full of chocolate-making machinery. But actually, Walter Baker is first and foremost *people*. The buildings and machines only exist to make things for *people*. The machines only go 'round because *people* with the experience and know-how work them. And the machines can only be bought in the first place because *people* loan us their money to buy them.

"Our business, here, like that of any other business in the United States, is to make and sell our products at a fair profit. But we know that the *only* way we can hope to continue successfully in business through the years — as we have now for almost two centuries — is to make that fair profit through serving *people* — and serving them well.

"We serve three main groups of people:

—The people who loan us the money to buy the tools we work with — our stockholders.

—The people who use the tools and make our products — our employees.

—And the people who buy our products — users.

"Good management consists of giving each of these groups of people a fair deal, of keeping a just balance between their interests at all times. So as you look at how our products are made and you hear and see what makes the wheels go around at Walter Baker, please remember that all of it is done by and for *people*."

Later, at one point in the tour, our

visitors are shown a group of silos, and next to them a new warehouse. The guide points out that these silos are to Walter Baker what the housewife's pantry is to her home and that the warehouse is really like the storage cellar where she keeps her home-preserved fruits and vegetables. These aren't just buildings, he says, but *tools*, that do things for *people* because the silos and warehouse make possible greatly stabilized employment.

Then the visitors are taken through the plant and the guides point up repeatedly how machines make jobs and how they benefit consumers. Back in the conference room, the personnel manager talks briefly about General Foods benefits, how the General Foods 1947 income dollar was spent and a few other subjects.

Finally he summarizes the principal points that have been driven home throughout the tour:

"First — *People who work at Walter Baker have good job opportunities and security . . .* the average man worker has been here 9½ years; he'll be able to retire at 65 with more than half his regular income because of the company retirement plan and Social Security.

"Second — *More and better jobs at Walter Baker have resulted from the use of machines . . .* over twice as many people have jobs here since machines have been introduced as when the business was a hand operation.

"Third — *Consumers get better products at lower prices as a result of the introduction of machines . . .* Baker's Breakfast Cocoa which sold for 46c a pound when it was made by hand operations cost the user only 29c a pound pre-war when made with machines. Even now, when we're paying 6 to 8 times the pre-war price for cocoa beans, you're getting it for 38c.

"Fourth — *The community benefits from having Walter Baker strong and growing . . .* the company makes 1,000

jobs for which it pays a weekly average of \$53,000 in wages and salaries. In addition it spends an average of \$60,000 a week locally for supplies and services.

"And first, last, and above all:

At Walter Baker we think in terms of PEOPLE . . ."

Here are some of the things we learned:

1. Restrict yourself to a few basic facts and figures.
2. Spell them out simply, in terms of visitors' interests.
3. Repeat them.
4. Tie them up in a neat bundle at the end.
5. Be sure the show is handled by people who have the right kind of personalities and who speak with convincing authority.

The Results?

Does this simple live demonstration of the company *work*? Do people *feel* any differently about a business after an exposure of this kind? Opinion Research Corporation interviewed 60 of our housewife visitors several days after they took the tour. They also interviewed a control group — an equal number of local housewives who had not taken the tour.

When the interviewers asked: "What were the main ideas you came away with?" the most frequent answers were: "The friendly atmosphere and spirit", "Walter Baker is a good place to work", "Employees are happy." When this question was asked: "What specific facts or figures did you learn about the company?" the answers revealed an amazing recall by respondents—all of whom were *housewives* whose lives are far removed from the field of business.

Ideas can be changed through plant tour education. "What do you think has been the over-all effect of use of machines at Walter Baker — to increase or decrease the number of jobs?" was another question asked. 87% of the visi-

(Please Turn to Page 32)

OUR CHALLENGING FUTURE

By

JULIE MEDLOCK

IN A TIME when leadership—calm, mature, informed—is desperately needed throughout the nation and the world, the public relations profession faces its greatest challenge.

Thus far we have not met that challenge.

Before we can effectively meet it, we must realize that it is largely by the use or misuse of the tools of our profession that the world will stand or fall, will turn from destruction to construction, from historic international anarchy to a determined peace and progress for all the peoples of the globe.

Before we can be effective, we must know where we stand personally on the issues of the day and how much we are personally prepared to give of ourselves and our special knowledge toward the just solution of our common problems. We must convince ourselves of the validity of the world crisis while there is yet time to do something about it, instead of merely giving frightened lip-service to it, or, ostrich-like, ignoring the whole thing. We must personally lay aside our cynicism and opportunism, and find the positive values and positive hopes which can be built into reality.

JULIE MEDLOCK is a New York public relations consultant and a member of the Board of the Public Relations Society of America. She is currently engaged as Executive Director in the establishment of a non-profit, non-political educational organization, in effect a foundation, called Public Interest, Inc. which will apply the techniques and procedures of public relations and publicity to public interest matters on local, national and international levels.

There is a terrible accusation awaiting those, in this atomic age, who have the power to prevent the misfortunes to mankind of war and economic chaos, and who fail to do so.

This accusation will surely fall upon us unless we use with wisdom and courage our acquired techniques for making and dealing with public opinion, toward the end of solving our common problems by common action. The obligation is a tremendous one, and a responsibility it is now too late for us to abandon. Now we can only go ahead within the limits of our human frailty, expending in the process all that we have or can attain of knowledge, vision, ethical values, and sheer determined effort to inform and educate.

For war and economic chaos are not inevitable.

We can stem the tide toward them if we will.

The ethical issue on the parallel economic and political, national and international fronts, is simply whether we mean to destroy one another in order to impose our ideas, or whether the peoples of the earth can live together in the same world and still differ in institutions, laws and philosophies of life.

Real leaders who understand this—men and women fearless enough to chart new paths, to put the good of the nation and the world above personal ambition, above party, above old and outmoded habits of thinking are the historic necessity of our time.

There are potential leaders of this calibre, probably many more than we now realize, scattered through our scien-

tific, academic, business, industrial and professional structure.

It is part of our job as professionals in the public relations field to find these leaders to put impact behind them, to interpret the constructive and orderly processes for which they stand, to help them, by our established techniques, to turn the direction of our aggressive instincts to the battle against the natural enemies of mankind—against floods and drouths, destruction and waste, poverty, hunger, distress, disease — instead of against our fellow men. This battle to remove the causes of our social and economic maladies, instead of merely treating the symptoms as we have for the most part done in the past, is a battle we can worthily fight with all the human fury we possess, for the good of all.

Moreover, it is a battle which can unify the world.

If we have it within ourselves to visualize the challenge and the need and personally to give this kind of leadership, this we must do, too.

It's Time to Take a Firm Stand

At the same time we must stand squarely in the path of those who act to destroy the benefits of our free way of life by obviously profiting at the expense of others, by expressing greed, hatred, unconcern for the common welfare, or whose inertia puts a restraining hand upon progress toward the solution of our common problems. It is imperative that we keep our critical faculties at a high pitch, refusing to be stampeded into cooperation and action for any reason whatsoever except our own deep satisfaction that the direction in which we are asked to move is toward the practical, the constructive, the ethical, in short, toward our real objectives. We must refuse persistently to accept the *status quo* when its usefulness is past,

we must reject superficial reasoning, and those who fearfully measure their lives and their actions by these.

We are on the threshold of a promising new age in which we can see our boldly acclaimed ideals become realities.

So, specifically, what can we of the public relations profession, possessing a special knowledge which allows us to influence the minds of men, do to begin to be effective on the world scene?

We can incorporate actively into our thinking and planning a phrase to serve us as a measuring rod of accomplishment, intention and objective. That phrase is simply this: "...in the public interest."

We can make this phrase come alive in the business and industrial spheres in which most of us serve out our daily lives. For business and industry does not exist in a vacuum, but is a vital part of all other modes of thought and action. The public interest and the private interest which constitutes so great a part of our free and democratic way of life are not mutually incompatible. In the long run, they are the same thing. Their union now calls for compromise, but a compromise thrilling in its promise of peace and prosperity for the world. For just as giving up certain sovereignty by nations will ultimately allow for the establishment of a world federation under world law, so the abandonment of small sovereignties in our personal and economic lives will allow for a unity of action which will ultimately solve many of our most pressing problems.

The Public Interest

We can teach our clients and the public to think in terms of the public interest in addition to their own. We can help them close the great gap between our democratic precept and our democratic practice. We can show them how to make democracy and our system of

free institutions really work...and if they are really working for the good of all, no idea, not even communism, can win over them. We can show our clients and the public how to set our national house in order so that the United States can honestly deserve our place in the

spotlight of history as the great and benign leader of the world.

These and many other things we can do provided we have the stature and the courage.

Have we?

If so, let's begin today.

Walter Baker Plant Tour

(Continued from Page 29)

tors and only 21% of the non-visitors said to *increase* jobs. Whereas only 5% of the visitors and 55% of the non-visitors said to *decrease* jobs.

And most revealing and important of all, *attitudes* can be changed through plant tour education. No information whatever was given our plant visitors on the subject of company profits. However, in the survey this question was asked of both visitors and non-visitors: "What sort of profit would you guess Walter Baker makes — a very big profit, a reasonable profit, or a very small profit?" The answers showed that 17% of the visitors and 40% of the non-visitors guessed very big. But 70% of the visitors thought the company profits were probably *reasonable* whereas only 40% of the non-visitors felt they'd be reasonable. 5% of the visitors guessed very small — none of the non-visitors

fell into this category.

Perhaps this finding, which sharply points up an *attitude difference* after taking the tour, is the *real* pay-off. It clearly demonstrates that establishing the company's good motives in the minds of our community neighbors is the heart of the job we're trying to accomplish. In summary, this experiment with an unelaborate, inexpensive plant tour at Walter Baker, to our mind, says two principal things — and says them loudly and clearly:

- 1) Live demonstration of a company through the medium of this new kind of plant tour is a quick and powerful means of gaining community understanding.
- 2) Establish the company's good motives and people give you the benefit of the doubt.

The foregoing case history of a Walter Baker Plant tour was presented by Miss Gordon before the First Fall Clinic of the New York chapter of PRSA on September 29th.

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Book Review Section

CHACE CONLEY, Book Review Editor

ORDEAL BY PLANNING

Reviewed by Robert C. Shook, Director of Research, International Statistical Bureau, Inc.

IN ITS IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICT with the planned economy, free enterprise capitalism needs badly a defender possessing the powers of exposition now used so consistently (and so successfully!) as a "continually destabilizing social influence" by those who regard State planning as the only solution to present day problems.

Professor Jewkes, in *Ordeal By Planning*, admits that many men of good will have become converts of the popular theory that the State can succeed where free enterprise must fail. He undertakes the (admittedly negative) task of showing that their legitimate aspirations must be completely and finally frustrated by the system they would create — central State planning.

He is profoundly disturbed by the businessman's silence in face of attacks "which are now falling on him thick and fast." And he insists that the enemies of free enterprise capital could not have made the progress they have made "were it not for the current misrepresentations and pure ignorance regarding the nature of the economic system: ignorance of the working of the price system, of the part played by risk-taking and speculation in economic progress, of the need for freedom for those minds which must do the path-breaking for society, of the enormous economic progress made by free societies in the last half-century and of their power to defend themselves, in the last extremity, against the armed force of

totalitarian States." "The wildest ideas," he points out, "are abroad . . ."

Whether one agrees with every point of Professor Jewkes' contention that State planning must end in slavery replacing freedom, one is forced to agree that "the habits of compromise, of empiricism, of tolerance and of open-mindedness which alone make a free society possible are just the habits which render the democrat an almost sitting target for his totalitarian opponents."

The advocate of planning dodges unscrupulously between dual standards, comparing his blue-print ideal with the defective working of the system he wants to get rid of, suppressing the evidence of what has happened in those countries where State planning is approaching its logical result.

What Professor Jewkes demands for free-enterprise capitalism is a fairer trial in the arena of public opinion. What businessmen and their public relations counselors must do is organize this campaign of defense and education. And for such a campaign, Professor Jewkes (no anti-liberal, anti-Russian extremist, by the way) provides a substantial supply of intelligently selected ammunition. (*ORDEAL BY PLANNING*, by John Jewkes. Macmillan Co. 248 pp. — \$3.75)

YOUR PUBLIC RELATIONS

Reviewed by Averell Broughton, New York Public Relations Consultant.

GLENN AND DENNY GRISWOLD have gone to a great deal of pains and labor in the production of this round

robin of articles on many phases of public relations activity. They have called it "a handbook," although its material is not really organized for ready reference after the fashion of an engineer's handbook or the excellent volume entitled "*Practical Public Relations*" published by Harpers in 1947 for Dr. Rex Harlow and Marvin M. Black.

Many able public relations people have contributed descriptions of their operating methods and viewpoints in separate articles on important aspects of their work. The unified nature of public relations activity is evident from the amount of repetition which is inevitably associated with such a method despite the strenuous editorial efforts of the Griswolds.

All but three of the thirty-two articles are followed by "editors notes" which range in length from two to eight pages each. The total of specific material contributed by the Griswolds, exclusive of the pages about the authors at the beginning, occupies over one hundred pages, so that they themselves are the largest contributors to their compilation.

The acting practitioner of public relations who is at the same time active in the professional societies in the field will find a great deal that is familiar but still useful in the volume and he will also find the occasional wise and shrewd comment of an able individual which will be helpful to him in confirming his own experience. The beginner will get an excellent idea of the wide range of public relations activity today.

It is a book dealing with the working parts of a craft rather than the philosophy of a profession.

The book can be read most advantageously in a number of sittings. Many of the individual articles are important and helpful and some are provocative. The eternal uncertainty of the newspaper editor as to what constitutes public relations is mirrored in the shrewd comment of newspaper people and indicates

that the cleavage between publicity and public relations is still far from clear. Nor have all the hatchets been buried.

The book is, to some degree, a mirror of the business mind of our times. It emphasizes the fact that businessmen of our age are too pressed to read as fully and as widely as they should. The great problems of our day, in individual and group psychology, in economics, in historical evaluation, the clash of world forces, population trends, in ideology, religion and science or the social results of applied science play little part in this volume save as they cause effects which one or another of the chapters deals with in terms of its results with rarely a hint as to its cause.

For the thoughtful reader the book with its impressive and distinguished list of contributors is an indication of both the strength and the weakness of public relations today as well as of the strength and weakness of the business civilization of which public relations is beginning to be accepted as a partial voice. (*YOUR PUBLIC RELATIONS — The Standard Public Relations Handbook. Edited by Glenn Griswold and Denny Griswold.* Funk & Wagnalls Co. 634 pp. — \$7.50)

MODERN CORPORATE REPORTS

Reviewed by Arthur J. C. Underhill, Vice President, Standard Research Consultants.

STRICTLY SPEAKING, the purpose of an annual report is to give stockholders the highlights of a company's operations and finances — management's account of how it ran the business. While many companies still adhere to the old formula of issuing a formal document which barely meets the requirements, in general a vast improvement has taken place in recent years in the technique of corporate reporting.

This change reflects the widespread desire for more informative and better organized statements as well as the need

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for winning stockholder confidence and support. Further, top management has found that a modernized report, while meeting its obligations to stockholders, also has far-reaching possibilities as an educational medium for informing the other segments of a company's public. They have learned that the information given to stockholders is important also to employees, customers, suppliers and the communities in which the plant or business is located. In short, the annual report has become an important public relations instrument.

Like public relations itself, there is no omnibus formula for an annual report. Every report must be custom-tailored to the specific requirements and character of each individual company. How to prepare the report—what to say and how to say it—the effective use of charts, graphs and photos to illustrate the text—art, color, layouts—in fact, all aspects call for specialized treatment and techniques.

In *Modern Corporate Reports*, Lillian Doris has explored the full range of opportunities in a manner that should prove invaluable to all who are concerned with the preparation and production of annual reports. Every detail has been covered in this comprehensive treatise. There are checklists for each phase, with a wealth of practical examples of their application, as gleaned from various award-winning reports. Surveys of stockholder desires and reactions provide the background for the topical discussions.

Miss Doris has effectively outlined the procedures for handling the report from beginning to end, and has treated on a very practical basis such important elements as costs and scheduling. The book is replete with ideas for statistical summaries, charts, ideas for saving time and costs, with many suggestions for improving the financial narrative and overall presentation.

For layman and specialist alike, *Mo-*

dern Corporate Reports is recommended as an indispensable guide toward more informative reports and improved stockholder relations. (MODERN CORPORATE REPORTS, by Lillian Doris. Prentice-Hall, Inc. 309 pp. — \$10.00)

NOBODY'S FOOL

Reviewed by Martin Kane, Editorial Supervisor of Public Relations — Department of Publicity, J. Walter Thompson.

TAKING THE PLOT CERM of a movie which proved a successful comedy vehicle for Jack Haley and Adolphe Menjou, and adding most of the cheaper ingredients which assured sales for "The Hucksters," Charles Yale Harrison has produced a stacked deck of a novel which bellows righteously against the morals of public relations agencies. The old, sophomoric "prostitution" cry is raised again in "Nobody's Fool."

Since Harrison is a more skilled writer than Frederick Wakeman, most of the gaucheries which filled "The Hucksters" are missing from this tale of a public relations firm and its machinations. He takes a patently spurious idea—that a Missouri linotyper could be built by publicity into a national hero as the embodiment of The Common Man—and invests it with a kind of plausibility which may be convincing to lay readers. For climax, the Common Man linotyper revolts against the role he has been persuaded to play and for anti-climax the hero, a slick public relations practitioner, marries the noble, Whitman-quoting, ex-wife of a GI he picked up in a Chicago bar and slept with whenever a chapter seemed about to go dull. The book is stocked further with a vicious industrialist (NOT named Evan Llewellyn Evans), an alcoholic publicist who wants to write pure poetry, a humbug of a liberal Senator, sleeping pills, gin and bitters and a

(Please Turn to Page 40)

Selling the Community

By
FRANK J. RYAN

AS MEMBERS of the public relations profession, you and I know the biggest job that confronts big business today is selling itself on its merits to the American people.

Since the war, big business has been losing public confidence.

This is shown by a confidential report on comparative national surveys which a public opinion research organization of highest calibre made this month to its clients.

According to this report, high prices have put big business on the spot.

Dewey puts the blame for high prices on Truman — Truman blames Congress — and Wallace blames big business.

But if all the people who seem to agree with Wallace on this point were to vote for him, the survey indicates that Wallace would be elected president!

People not only blame big business for high prices, but the majority also think that it holds production *down* to keep prices *up*, and that it conspires to circumvent price competition.

At the same time the public, naturally irked by high prices, forgets that big business has developed most of the resources and the production which have made America the world's strongest nation, and have given the American people the world's highest standard of living.

Frank J. Ryan, Assistant to the President and head of the public relations and advertising departments of The Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company. "Selling the Community" was a presentation before the First Fall Clinic of the New York chapter of PRSA on September 29th.

Despite present all-time high production of most necessities and luxuries, improved products and new products, record-making payrolls and profits, full employment and prosperity, it appears that a very large part of the American public distrusts big business.

The fact that people feel this way should not astonish anyone. Americans have a native prejudice against concentration of power. They have this prejudice against big business. And, unfortunately, this is a growing prejudice.

The public opinion survey report I am citing, shows that two years ago the majority of people who had formed an opinion, were *against* more government regulation of business; but today the majority of those who have formed an opinion, are *for* more regulation.

This trend in favor of more regulation has serious implications for business. If anyone thinks that the election of Dewey and Warren, together with a Republican majority in both houses of Congress, will reverse this trend, he is likely to be disappointed. It is a trend that only business itself can change for the better.

Further, business will have to gain the confidence and good will of the great majority of American people, to free itself from threats of ultimate nationalization, and to help save America from any part of totalitarianism.

Freedom certainly is everybody's business, but it is the special business of Business with a capital "B".

The American people cannot get along, and know they cannot get along, without big business—big industry—big production—and big progress.

The American people think big, act big, and demand big values.

If business as now constituted cannot meet the mark, eventually the American people will put some new order of leadership on the job — even if it means socialization of many a business and industry.

The biggest thing in America is the American people. As a nation they will not be denied anything they really want. And they will not endure anything they don't want.

We Americans are natural do-gooders, but we are also natural get-ridders.

When business convinces the majority of the American people it is all to the good, and all for their good, they will get rid of the oppression of business.

Business is people—and, like people, business has within itself much more good than evil.

The difficulty is, the reputation of business is not nearly as good as its character.

I was impressed by this fact here in New York last spring, when I attended a dinner given by Forbes Magazine in honor of the 50 men who, in a national poll, had been voted the 50 foremost leaders of American business.

The personal character of these 50 men, and the business character of their enterprises, are by business standards of the best. They and their businesses are doing a great job for all of us. They are vital assets to our nation.

This is their reputation in the brotherhood of business. But it is not their reputation with all of the American people.

Until such leadership and service are understood and appreciated by the great majority of our citizens and voters, and equally by their representatives in the Congress, in the state legislatures, and in the city councils throughout the country, business can feel no real security against demagoguery and bureaucracy.

Assuming that business is of good character, what more can its leadership do to get for it a corresponding reputation? What more can we public relations people do to help?

First, we can think of all America as a single community—a modern, close-knit community in which distance has been practically eliminated by the telephone, the radio and television, and airplane.

We can think of it, too, in terms of thousands of local communities which constitute our national community.

We can realize that the best place to build increasing and enduring national confidence for business, is in each and all of these local communities.

We have seen plenty of evidence that business does not gain full confidence for itself merely by the process of supplying its products and services at fair prices.

Neither does business add to its stature in public opinion by defending itself, by so-called "explaining" or "interpreting" itself, and by singing its own praises.

Over and above the world's greatest production and distribution, *plus* fair prices and good wages and satisfactory earnings, *plus* research and improvements in products and services, *plus* sound advertising and solid publicity, business should develop one more dynamic *plus*.

Business should address itself anew to all round upbuilding of the American community — both the national community, and the local community.

What upbuilds the community, upbuilds business.

For this reason alone, business leadership should assume its full responsibilities in all departments of community building — economic, civic, and social.

Business should eagerly undertake every obligation of full participation in community development. It should do its utmost to develop the churches

and community chests, the schools and the colleges, public improvements and public services.

Doing this is primarily management's responsibility. But management alone does not constitute big business. Labor, too, is in big business.

Where management will do its part in community building, labor will go along. Where management and labor work together in community building, they have a common cause which exceeds individual, selfish considerations. This creates an ideal combination. It creates a healthful atmosphere for business and industry.

It takes both manpower and money to do a real job of community-building. It takes leadership and it takes plenty of work. But it is an investment that pays for itself many times over.

This certainly has proved true in Cleveland, where during the past 15 years business leadership has set the pace in community-building.

In consequence, the Cleveland area today has a most healthful atmosphere for business and industry. This was not always so. During the '30's the Cleveland area lost population. Thousands moved away because they had lost faith in the community. But during the '40's this same area has gained population faster than the nation. Tens of thousands have come to Cleveland because they have new faith in the area, and their future in it.

This change has been largely the result of the work done by Cleveland's business leadership in "selling the community", and making it a better community. Today Cleveland is prosperous.

It takes four steps to upbuild a community. You must:—

FIRST, sell yourself *on* the community.

SECOND, sell yourself *to* the community.

THIRD, sell the community *on* itself.

FOURTH, sell the community, and its

products and its services, *to* other communities, far and wide.

For a long time, I had the idea that the Cleveland area was the best location in the nation for many industries.

Ten years ago I conducted for the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company, which supplies the area with electric light and power service, a survey of the area's assets, and made an estimate of its potentials.

The forecast was definitely optimistic.

For over 40 years before this survey, the Illuminating Company had worked at upbuilding business and industry and employment.

During the past ten years the company has greatly expanded its operations in this field. It has continually researched the assets of the area, marshalled sales points, and applied modern sales engineering techniques to help expand industry, improve business, and increase employment.

Four years ago, with victory in World War II in sight, and with the problems of postwar reconversion, demobilization and re-employment looming, the company started a new campaign to sell the nation on Cleveland's superior advantages for many industries and businesses.

Campaign Objectives

In this campaign the company advertises in national magazines, in newspapers, and by direct mail to achieve three primary objectives:

1. To sell Cleveland at the best location for production and distribution;
2. To sell Cleveland as the best location for management headquarters, national or regional;
3. To sell Cleveland products and services.

The ultimate goal, of course, is to develop business and industry, to increase employment and multiply opportunity, and to expand payrolls and

profits,

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profits, for everybody's benefit.

In all of its national advertising the company features a regional map with five concentric circles and the line identifying the Cleveland area as "The Best Location in the Nation."

The advertising is supported by a confidential, complete location engineering service, available to all industries established in the area, and to prospective new industries.

Without community support no development campaign can succeed. In the Cleveland campaign, the company has had the cooperation of, and has cooperated with, many agencies, institutions, organizations and individuals.

In order to obtain maximum community support the company conducts a vigorous, local community-selling campaign in newspapers and other publications, on the radio, by direct mail, and by speeches to business, professional and other groups.

As another tool in this campaign, the company recently sponsored a documentary motion picture, which was produced by The March of Time, and is entitled "OPPORTUNITY, the Story of the Best Location in the Nation."

This is a picture of, about and for the 1,500,000 people of the Cleveland area. It was designed to re-sell them on the area's advantages, and the opportunities it offers them and their children—and to make them all salesmen for the area.

In less than six months this picture was shown to more than 1,300,000 people in the area; that is, to more than 4 out of 5. Over 770,000 people paid to see it in movie theatres. This was at over 120 theatres, each of which gave it a full run.

Because the film is a mirror of the way people live, and work, and enjoy life, in a large American industrial center, various businessmen and government officials have taken it abroad—and on their own initiative—and have shown

it in Greece, Turkey, Egypt, Korea and other countries.

Lately the U. S. Department of Defense has been working with The March of Time in preparing a special edition, to be called "Cleveland, U. S. A.", for showing overseas to win in foreign lands new appreciation of the American way of life.

The Illuminating Company is continuing its community-selling campaign for the development of the 130 communities in which it does business.

At the same time, it is applying itself diligently to being a good neighbor in all these communities, and to encouraging all of its employees to be good neighbors, by participating energetically in constructive community enterprises.

The company plans for such participation as thoroughly as it plans the design, construction and operation of a new power plant. A committee of five top executives, with a full-time secretary, is charged with the responsibility of conducting this program. This committee aims at making every dollar it spends for community-building, a dollar well spent, for the community and for the company.

Has the Cleveland development paid off?

During the past three years more than a half billion dollars of private capital has been invested, or committed for investment, in industrial expansion in the Cleveland area.

In addition, new construction programs for commercial enterprises, utilities, hospitals and public works in the area, total over a billion dollars.

The people of the area today have in the aggregate much more income, and a higher standard of living, than ever before.

The Illuminating company's success in "selling the community" has been widely recognized, and often praised, by many people and by the press.

Its public relations are of the best.

By "selling the community"—by helping to create more goods, more jobs, and more opportunities, and a higher standard of living — this utility company has advanced itself, and has helped to advance business generally.

Here is a basic pattern that is adaptable to all business. It works, and pays for itself.

It is a pattern I can commend to big business — and particularly to you

who are guiding the public relations of large companies.

By "selling your community" UP, you will sell your business UP.

Back up community selling with community service, and you will put business on the best route to national confidence and good will.

I hope you will do it — I know you can do it!

Book Review Section

(Continued from Page 35)

generous description of a strip-tease performance.

Harrison used to be a public relations man himself once, though his practice was limited to the fields of "labor, liberal and humanitarian causes," according to the dust jacket, but he takes the view in his novel that whenever a corporation practices liberalism and humanitarianism it does so out of a low, mean desire for profit. Existence of the profit motive in industry appears to be proof to Harrison that U. S. Steel is not really Santa Claus. Somehow, this discovery has wounded him.

Newspaper people who read "Nobody's Fool" will writhe at representations of wire service copy which appear in its pages, particularly as they are

offered to advance the theme that a shrewd public relations agency could get away with a stunt which any feature writer would be delighted to kid into oblivion. Harrison's "bulletins" would never get past the first relay point of any press association.

If Harrison had told his preposterous tale as a farce, something the movies had the good taste to do a few years ago, little harm would have been done. As it is, public relations men must now be prepared to bore themselves with defenses against the gay wisecracks of those who still think of newspaper men as irresponsible drunks and advertising men as wearers of \$35 neckties. (*Nobody's Fool*, by Charles Yale Harrison. Henry Holt & Co. 300 pp. — \$3.00)

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